



# Media Release



**\*\*\*For Immediate Release\*\*\***

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## **Washington State Patrol and Seattle Police Department**

### **"Pocket Bikes"**

The Seattle Police Department and the Washington State Patrol would like to remind those purchasing Pocket Bikes (or other similar devices) as gifts this season, to be aware of how and where to safely operate them. These devices are not manufactured to be operated on public roads, on sidewalks, in bike lanes, or other areas prohibiting the use of motorized vehicles. Enforcement action will be taken if the device is operated where prohibited.

Pocket bikes, pocket rockets, and other similar type of mini motorcycles are small (most measure only 12 to 18 inches in overall height), fast, and manufactured primarily as a racing bike and intended for off-road use only. Pocket bikes may not be legally operated on public roads. Additionally, they may not be operated on sidewalks, bike lanes, trails, or anyplace prohibiting the use of motorized vehicles.

Pocket bikes are similar in performance and application to that of a motor-driven cycle or a motorcycle. Pocket bikes meet the definition of a motorcycle as outlined in Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 46.04.330 which states in part, "'Motorcycle' means a motor vehicle designed to travel on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground, on which the driver rides astride the motor unit or power train and is designed to be steered with a handle bar, . . ." However, pocket bikes do not meet many of the equipment requirements for motorcycles that may be legally operated on roadways. These requirements are outlined in statutes and include: a minimum wheel base of three feet six inches (RCW 46.44.050); minimum headlamp height of 24 inches (RCW 46.37.523); minimum tail lamp height of 15 inches (RCW 46.37.525); two mirrors (RCW 46.37.400); pneumatic rubber tires (RCW 46.37.420); and others. Additionally, pocket bikes are not manufactured with a conforming 17-digit vehicle identification number (VIN), indicating the manufacturer did not meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) which are required for motor vehicles of any class to be operated on public roads. Operators of motor-driven cycles or motorcycles must also have a valid driver's license, a motorcycle endorsement, and must wear a helmet.

Under RCW 46.20.024, it is a misdemeanor for any person to cause or knowingly permit a child, who is under the age of eighteen, to drive a motor vehicle on any highway without the State's authorization.

In addition to the above restrictions, many cities and counties have enacted ordinances further restricting the operation of pocket bikes.

All RCW's may be viewed in their entirety by accessing the Office of the Code Revisers website at [slc.leg.wa.gov](http://slc.leg.wa.gov).